

SECURITY INFORMATION

Executive Registry

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MAY 21 1953

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Historical

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Security

VIA : Deputy Director (Administration) *W. R. G. /ms.*

SUBJECT : Use of the Polygraph

REFERENCE : Director of Security Memorandum dated
13 April 1953, subject: Polygraph Operations
Within CIA.

1. The use of the polygraph as a technical aid to interrogation and adjunct to background investigation for the purpose of security clearance of employees of the agency may be continued on a voluntary basis. However, we should not forget that the polygraph can be in error and consequently proper care should be exercised in the use of information obtained from it.

2. I understand that the efficiency of the polygraph depends to a very large degree on the ability of the operators. I know that you have had this matter under careful study and want you to continue to exert your efforts toward the development of a highly professional corps of operators.

3. Naturally, we will continue to make use, in every instance, of as thorough an investigation as the circumstance of each case permits.

Allen W. Dulles
Allen W. Dulles
Director

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APR 13 1953

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence.
THROUGH: Deputy Director (Administration)
SUBJECT: Polygraph Operations Within CIA

1. Following is a brief account of the history, method of operation and results of the polygraph program as used since its inception within this Agency.

a. History

(1) Early in 1948, at the direction of the DCI, research was begun to determine the application of the polygraph to security problems. At that time the research was aimed principally at developing a quick method of security clearances in the event of a national emergency. On 23 August 1948 the Director of Central Intelligence issued a memorandum to all Assistant Directors (Tab A), informing that the Office of Security was directed "to conduct research and planning in the use of technical devices which could improve and expedite the conduct of personnel security investigations in time of emergency." This directive authorized the testing of employees or applicants on a voluntary basis.

(2) Early research with the polygraph immediately indicated that it had a definite application to security problems. In October 1948 polygraph examinations were given persons in connection with their clearances for Special Intelligence. Following this use and in order to increase the number of cases tested for experimental purposes, all employees of the Security Office voluntarily took polygraph examinations. This effort was extended initially to cover high ranking officials of the Agency; then, other offices as units.

(3) Because of the excellent results obtained from the preliminary use of the polygraph thus far, it was decided in the spring of 1951 to expand the program to include routine screening of employees prior to departure for overseas assignments, as well as employees returning from extended periods of overseas duty. In the fall of 1951 a procedure was initiated whereby all applicants, as a part of their entry on duty processing, were given polygraph examinations on a voluntary basis. This program has continued without interruption.

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(4) Recently a survey of the Office of the Deputy Director (Plans) revealed that, with the exception of approximately two hundred persons, all personnel of that office have been polygraphed.

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b. Method of Use of the Polygraph

(1) Throughout its history within the Agency the polygraph has always been used as a technical aid to interrogation and as an adjunct to background investigations. Each polygraph examination is given on a voluntary basis and each individual so signifies by a signed statement prior to the examination. No Agency regulations have been issued making polygraph examination compulsory, and no employee has been discharged because of refusal to take a polygraph test.

(2) Each polygraph examination is preceded by an explanation of the machine and the procedure. All questions of a security nature asked during the test are read to the individual before the test begins, thus, giving complete opportunity for refusal to proceed with the test. As mentioned above, refusal has not been used as a cause for dismissal. Similarly, no adverse action has been taken solely on the basis of reactions on the machine. Action is based only on admissions received during interrogation or on further evidence developed through investigation of leads revealed in the tests.

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(2) Throughout the polygraph program only four persons have refused to volunteer to take the examinations. These persons are still employed by the Agency. *

(3) The above statistics are considered by this office to be extremely sensitive.

3. Considering the results of the polygraph program and its benefits from a security standpoint, I am convinced that its use since 1948 has immeasurably increased the security of this Agency.

SIGNED

Sheffield Edwards
Colonel, GSC
Director of Security

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Attachment

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
Washington 25, D. C.

Applicant Information
Sheet No. 2

1. In accordance with its special national responsibilities, the Central Intelligence Agency is obliged to judge carefully the suitability of each person applying for a position in the Agency. To assist in this determination, a loyalty, background, and character investigation is conducted. This investigation includes, but is not limited to, inquiries concerning:

- a. professional competence
- b. any behavior, activities or associations which tend to show that the individual is of questionable character, discretion, integrity or trustworthiness
- c. any deliberate misrepresentations, falsifications, or omission of material facts
- d. any criminal, infamous, dishonest, immoral, or notoriously disgraceful conduct, habitual use of intoxicants to excess, drug addiction, or sexual perversion
- e. physical fitness
- f. an adjudication of insanity, serious mental illnesses, neurological disorders, or emotional instability
- g. any facts which furnish reason to believe that the individual may be subjected to coercion, influence, or pressure which may cause him to act contrary to the best interests of the national security
- h. commission of any act of sabotage, espionage, treason, or sedition, or attempts thereat or preparation therefor, or conspiring with, or aiding or abetting, another to commit or attempt to commit any act of sabotage, espionage, treason, or sedition
- i. establishing or continuing a sympathetic association with a saboteur, spy, traitor, seditionist, anarchist, or revolutionist, or with an espionage or other secret agent or representative of a foreign nation, or any representative of a foreign nation whose interests may be inimical to the interests of the United States, or with any person who advocates the use of force or violence to overthrow the government of the United States or the alteration of the form of government of the United States by unconstitutional means